

**Amendment and Response**

Applicant: Michael D. Whitmarsh et al.

Serial No.: 09/686,849

Filed: October 10, 2000

Docket No.: 10003976-1

Title: INTERNET PRINT BROKERING SYSTEM AND METHOD

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**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please cancel claims 9, 29, and 42 without prejudice.

Please amend claims 1, 10, 13, 15, 17, 19, 30, 33-35, 37, and 39 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of brokering a print job between a customer and a plurality of print providers, the method comprising:

providing a print brokering system controller having a printing capability of each of the print providers registered therewith;

defining a network communication link between the customer and the print brokering system controller;

receiving a print request for the print job at the print brokering system controller via the network communication link, including receiving a parameter of a performance attribute of the print job;

comparing the print request for the print job with the printing capability of each of the print providers and determining which of the print providers have the printing capability to fulfill the print request, ~~including querying the print providers which have the printing capability to fulfill the print request on the performance attribute of the print job and receiving a response thereto~~ including performing a first match of the print request with the printing capability of the print providers and establishing a first subset of the print providers based on the first match, querying the first subset of the print providers on the performance attribute of the print job and receiving a response thereto, and performing a second match of the parameter of the performance attribute with the response thereto and establishing a second subset of the print providers based on the second match; and

compiling a list of ~~at least one of the second subset of~~ the print providers which has the printing capability to fulfill the print request and matches the performance attribute of the print job, and presenting the list to the customer via the network communication link, the list excluding print providers which do not have the printing capability to fulfill the print request.

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2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein defining the network communication link includes defining an Internet communication link between the customer and the print brokering system controller.
3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
registering the printing capability of each of the print providers with the print brokering system controller.
4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein defining the network communication link includes defining the network communication link between the customer, the print providers, and the print brokering system controller, and wherein registering the printing capability includes registering the printing capability of each of the print providers with the print brokering system controller via the network communication link.
5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein registering the printing capability includes registering at least one of a file format compatibility, a print medium capability, a printing layout capability, a color printing capability, a finishing capability, a delivery capability, and an identification of each of the print providers.
6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein registering the printing capability includes storing a registration of the printing capability of each of the print providers, and wherein comparing the print request includes retrieving the printing capability of each of the print providers.
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the print request includes specifying at least one of a file format, a number of copies, a print medium, a printing layout, a color printing option, a finishing option, a delivery option, and a customer identification for the print job.

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9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 9~~ claim 1, wherein the first subset of the print providers is one of less than the plurality of print providers and equal to the plurality of print providers.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein the second subset of the print providers is one of less than the first subset of the print providers and equal to the first subset of the print providers.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the performance attribute of the print job includes at least one of a price of the print job, an availability to complete the print job, and a turnaround time for completing the print job.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein compiling the list includes ranking the ~~at least one second subset~~ of the print providers based on the performance attribute of the print job.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein comparing the print request and compiling the list are performed by the print brokering system controller.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein compiling the list includes ranking the ~~at least one second subset~~ of the print providers based on at least one attribute of the print request.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
selecting at least one print provider of the ~~at least one second subset~~ of the print providers to fulfill the print job; and

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submitting the print job to the at least one print provider.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein defining the network communication link includes defining the network communication link between the customer, the print providers, and the print brokering system controller, and wherein submitting the print job includes submitting the print job to the at least one print provider via the network communication link.

19. (Currently Amended) A system for brokering a print job between a customer and a plurality of print providers, the system comprising:

a print brokering system controller configured to have a printing capability of the print providers registered therewith,

wherein the print brokering system controller is adapted to receive a print request for the print job and compare the print request with the printing capability of the print providers to determine which of the print providers have the printing capability to fulfill the print request, the print request including a parameter of a performance attribute of the print job,

wherein the print brokering system controller is adapted to query the print providers which have the printing capability to fulfill the print request on the performance attribute of the print job and receive a response thereto is adapted to perform a first match of the print request with the printing capability of the print providers and establish a first subset of the print providers based on the first match, query the first subset of the print providers on the performance attribute of the print job and receive a response thereto, and perform a second match of the parameter of the performance attribute with the response thereto and establish a second subset of the print providers based on the second match, and

wherein the print brokering system controller is adapted to compile a list of at least one of the second subset of the print providers which has the printing capability to fulfill the print request and matches the performance attribute of the print job, and wherein the print brokering system controller is adapted to present the list to the customer, wherein the list excludes print providers which do not have the printing capability to fulfill the print request.

20. (Original) The system of claim 19, further comprising:

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a print provider interface configured to communicate with the print brokering system controller via a network communication link to transmit the printing capability of each of the print providers to the print brokering system controller.

21. (Original) The system of claim 20, wherein the network communication link is an Internet communication link.

22. (Original) The system of claim 20, wherein the print provider interface includes at least one of a file format options field, a print medium options field, a printing layout options field, a color printing options field, a finishing options field, a delivery options field, and a print provider identification field.

23. (Original) The system of claim 19, wherein the printing capability of each of the print providers includes at least one of a file format compatibility, a print medium capability, a printing layout capability, a color printing capability, a finishing capability, a delivery capability, and an identification of each of the print providers.

24. (Original) The system of claim 19, further comprising:

a print brokering data storage system configured to communicate with the print brokering system controller and store a registration of the printing capability of each of the print providers therein.

25. (Original) The system of claim 19, further comprising:

a customer interface configured to communicate with the print brokering system controller via a network communication link to transmit the print request for the print job to the print brokering system controller.

26. (Original) The system of claim 25, wherein the network communication link is an Internet communication link.

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27. (Original) The system of claim 25, wherein the customer interface includes at least one of a file format field, a number of copies field, a print medium field, a printing layout field, a color printing option field, a finishing option field, a delivery option field, and a customer identification field.
28. (Original) The system of claim 19, wherein the print request includes at least one of a file format, a number of copies, a print medium, a printing layout, a color printing option, a finishing option, a delivery option, and an identification for the print job.
29. (Cancelled)
30. (Currently Amended) The system of ~~claim 29~~ claim 19, wherein the first subset of the print providers is one of less than the plurality of print providers and equal to the plurality of print providers.
31. (Original) The system of claim 30, wherein the second subset of the print providers is one of less than the first subset of the print providers and equal to the first subset of the print providers.
32. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 19, wherein the performance attribute of the print job includes at least one of a price of the print job, an availability to complete the print job, and a turnaround time for completing the print job.
33. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 19, wherein the print brokering system controller is adapted to rank the ~~at least one~~ second subset of the print providers based on the performance attribute of the print job.
34. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 19, wherein the print brokering system controller is adapted to rank the ~~at least one~~ second subset of the print providers based on at least one attribute of the print request.

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35. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 19, wherein the print brokering system controller is adapted to present the list of the ~~at least one~~ second subset of the print providers to the customer via a network communication link.

36. (Original) The system of claim 35, wherein the network communication link is an Internet communication link.

37. (Currently Amended) A method of brokering a print job between a customer and a plurality of print providers, the method comprising:

providing a print brokering system controller having a printing capability of the print providers registered therewith;

generating and submitting a print request for the print job to the print brokering system controller, including submitting a parameter of a performance attribute of the print job;

comparing via the print brokering system controller the print request with the printing capability of ~~at least one of~~ the print providers and determining if ~~the at least one~~ which of the print providers ~~has~~ have the printing capability to fulfill the print request, ~~including querying the print providers which have the printing capability to fulfill the print request on the performance attribute of the print job and receiving a response thereto~~ including performing a first match of the print request with the printing capability of the print providers and establishing a first subset of the print providers based on the first match, querying the first subset of the print providers on the performance attribute of the print job and receiving a response thereto, and performing a second match of the parameter of the performance attribute with the response thereto and establishing a second subset of the print providers based on the second match;

compiling via the print brokering system controller a list including only ~~those~~ the second subset of print providers which have the printing capability to fulfill the print request and match the performance attribute of the print job; and

presenting the list to the customer.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, further comprising:

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defining an Internet communication link between the customer and the print brokering system controller,

wherein generating and submitting the print request includes generating and submitting the print request for the print job to the print brokering system controller via the Internet communication link, and

wherein presenting the list of print providers includes presenting the list of print providers to the customer via the Internet communication link.

39. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 38, wherein defining the Internet communication link includes defining the Internet communication link between the customer, the print providers, and the print brokering system controller, and further comprising:

selecting at least one print provider of the at least one second subset of the print providers to fulfill the print job; and

submitting the print job to the at least one print provider via the Internet communication link.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, further comprising:

registering the printing capability of the print providers with the print brokering system via the Internet communication link, including registering at least one of a file format compatibility, a print medium capability, a printing layout capability, a color printing capability, a finishing capability, a delivery capability, and an identification of the print providers.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein generating and submitting the print request includes specifying at least one of a file format, a number of copies, a print medium, a printing layout, a color printing option, a finishing option, a delivery option, and a customer identification for the print job.

42. (Cancelled)



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43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein the performance attribute of the print job includes at least one of a price of the print job, an availability to complete the print job, and a turnaround time for completing the print job.